

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 ACDA-12 CIAE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 HA-05 OMB-01 CCO-00 /091 W
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SECDEF NIACT IMMEDIATE
DIRNSA, FT MEADE, MD. NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE
USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 756
CINCPAC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 3262

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ASEC, PINS, PINT, AF
SUBJECT: THE COLLAPSE OF DAOUDISM: AN INITIAL ANALYSIS

1. SUMMARY. LOOKING BACK OVER THE VIOLENT EVENTS OF THE PAST
24 HOURS, IT IS OUR OPINION THAT FORMER PRESIDENT MOHAMMAD DAOUD
MADE INADEQUATE MILITARY PREPARATIONS TO BACK UP HIS CRACKDOWN
AGAINST THE COMMUNIST KHALQ PARTY LEADERSHIP (REFTEL) --
AND THAT SOME EVENT AT THE PUL-I-CHARKI TANK BASE ON THE MORNING
OF APRIL 27 MAY HAVE TRIGGERED THE COUP. DAOUDISM FAILED TO
MEASURE UP TO AFGHANISTAN'S NEEDS AND HAS BEEN REPLACED BY A
"NATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY MILITARY COUNCIL" (NRMCM) WHICH HAS NOT
YET REVEALED ITS TRUE POLITICAL COLORATION. END SUMMARY.

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2. FROM THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO US AT THIS TIME, WE THINK
THE APPARENTLY SUCCESSFUL (AT LEAST IN KABUL) COUP D'ETAT OF THE
NRMCM MAY HAVE BEEN TRIGGERED BY THE INEPT WAY IN WHICH DAOUD
APPEARED TO HAVE HANDLED THE CRACKDOWN AGAINST THE KHALQ LEADER-
SHIP. THE ARREST OF SEVEN TOP KHALQ CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS ON
APRIL 25 ALERTED THIS TOUGH, STRONG, HIGHLY DISCIPLINED PRO-
SOVIET PARTY THAT THE DIE WAS CAST. THE DAOUD REGIME'S APRIL 26

RADIO ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT THIS CRACKDOWN ADDED THAT "ADDITIONAL PEOPLE WHOSE ARREST HAS BEEN ORDERED ARE BEING SOUGHT." ADDITIONALLY, WE HAVE HEARD THAT GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WHO WERE KNOWN NOT TO BE IN THEIR OFFICES AT THE TIME OF THE APRIL 19 KHALQIST DEMONSTRATION HAD BEEN SACKED. THE "ADDITIONAL PEOPLE" UNDOUBTEDLY DID NOT SPEND THAT NIGHT SITTING ON THEIR HANDS.

3. SHORTLY AFTER 0900 ON APRIL 27, AN EMBASSY SECRETARY DRIVING TOWARD THE KABUL GORGE AND THE JALALABAD ROAD WAS TURNED BACK BY ARMED TROOPS AT THE PUL-I-CHARKI ARMORED CORPS BASE EAST OF KABUL. EMBASSY OFFICERS CHECKED OUT HER REPORT AND GOT THE IMPRESSION THAT THERE WAS TENSION AND DISSENSION AT THAT BASE. DAOUD'S POLICE COULD HAVE BEEN TRYING TO ROUND UP ADDITIONAL KHALQIST LEADERS -- OR THE DAOUD LOYALISTS MIGHT HAVE BEEN TRYING TO CREATE A DEFENSIVE FORCE FOR THE GOVERNMENT. THEY MAY HAVE COME INTO CONFLICT WITH ANTI-DAOUDIST ELEMENTS WHO SAW THAT THE MOMENT FOR THE COUP WAS AT HAND.

4. AROUND NOONTIME ON APRIL 27, NINE TANKS. APPARENTLY FROM PUL-I-CHARKI, RACED BY THE AMERICAN EMBASSY EN ROUTE TO THE PALACE. A U.S. MARINE CORPS EMBASSY GUARD TAILED THE COLUMN WITH HIS CAR AND SAW ONE TANK FIRE A ROUND AT THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE -- THEREBY IDENTIFYING THAT FORCE AS REBEL. MORE THAN 50 OTHER TANKS THEN MOVED INTO THE CITY PAST OUR EMBASSY. MUCH LATER, IT BECAME EVIDENT THAT THEIR FORCES WERE ALSO UNDER REBEL CONTROL. IN FACT, WITH ONE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION, THE TANKS IN KABUL DURING

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THE FIGHTING HAVE SEEMED TO BE WITH THE REBEL FORCES.

5. THE ARRIVAL OF THE AFGHAN AIR FORCE IN SUPPORT OF THE REBEL SIDE -- SOME THREE HOURS AFTER THE FIGHTING STARTED (PROBABLY BECAUSE OF ARMING TIME) -- CLINCHED THE FALL OF THE DAOUD GOVERNMENT. THE PRIMARY AIR FORCE TARGET WAS THE PALACE COMPOUND WHERE DAOUD AND HIS SUPPORTERS WERE GATHERED. THIS TIME LAG IN AIR FORCE PARTICIPATION REINFORCES OUR BELIEF THAT THE OUTBREAK OF THE COUP WAS SPONTANEOUS; OTHERWISE THE LEFTIST-LED AIR FORCE WOULD HAVE BEEN READY TO STRIKE SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH THE TANKS.

6. COMMENT: IN OUR OPINION, DAOUD FAILED TO MEASURE UP TO THE PROMISES HE HAS MADE SINCE THE 1973 COUP -- AND HAS PAID THE TRADITIONAL AFGHAN PRICE FOR SUCH FAILURE. (SINCE AMIR ABDUL RAHMAN DIED PEACEFULLY IN BED IN 1901, NO AFGHAN RULER HAS COMPLETED HIS REIGN IN AN ORDERLY FASHION). ALTHOUGH THE NEW REGIME HOLDS KABUL (BUT STILL SEEMS TO BE MEETING STIFF RESISTANCE AT THE FIRST CORPS HEADQUARTERS PAST DARULULAN), IT MAY FIND THE COMPLETE SUBJUGATION OF AFGHANISTAN DIFFICULT. ALSO, IT WILL BE FACED WITH THE SAME ECONOMIC, ADMINISTRATIVE, AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS THAT DAOUDISM FAILED TO CORRECT -- AND WITH THE ADDITIONAL DISADVANTAGES OF A POLITICALLY DIVIDED POPULATION AND A BADLY

SHATTERED INFRASTRUCTURE. THE NEW REGIME CONTINUES TO ISSUE
SOOTHING RADIO MESSAGES, CITE ITS DEVOTION TO ISLAM, AND REFRAINS
FROM DISPLAYING ANY COMMUNIST TRAPPINGS AT THIS TIME. WE CONTINUE
TO CAUTION, HOWEVER, AGAINST DRAWING ANY PREMATURE CONCLUSIONS
ABOUT ITS POLITICAL COLORATION.

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